

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

All THE YEAR ROUND

A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS

No. 739. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 1883.

PRICE TWOPENCE

MR. SCARBOROUGH'S FAMILY.

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XLIV. MR. PROSPER'S TROUBLES.

As Mr. Prosper sank into his armchair after the fatigue of the interview with his lawyer, he reflected that when all was considered Harry Annesley was an ungrateful pig,—it was thus he called him,—and that Miss Thoroughbung had many attractions. Miss Thoroughbung had probably done well to kiss him,—though the enterprise had not been without its peculiar dangers. He often thought of it when alone, and, as distance lent enchantment to the view, he longed to have the experiment repeated. Perhaps she had been right. And it would be a good thing, certainly, to have dear little children of his own. Miss Thoroughbung felt very certain on the subject, and it would be foolish for him to doubt. Then he thought of the difference between a pretty fair-haired little boy, and that ungrateful pig, Harry Annesley. He told himself that he was very fond of children. The girls over at the parsonage would not have said so, but they probably did not know his character.

When Harry had come back with his fellowship, his uncle had for a few weeks been very proud of him,—had declared that he should never be called upon to earn his bread, and had allowed him two hundred and fifty pounds a year to begin with. But no return had been made to this favour. Harry had walked in and out of the Hall as though it had already belonged to him,—as many a father delights to see his eldest son doing. But the uncle in this instance had not taken any delight in seeing it. An uncle is different from a father,—an uncle who has never had a child of his own. He wanted deference,

what he would have called respect; while Harry was at first prepared to give him a familiar affection based on equality,—on an equality in money matters and worldly interests, though I fear that Harry allowed to be seen his own intellectual superiority. Mr. Prosper, though an ignorant man, and by no means clever, was not such a fool as not to see all this. Then had come the persistent refusal to hear the sermons, and Mr. Prosper had sorrowfully declared to himself that his heir was not the young man that he should have been. He did not then think of marrying, nor did he stop the allowance; but he did feel that his heir was not what he should have been. But then the terrible disgrace of that night in London had occurred, and his eyes had been altogether opened by that excellent young man, Mr. Augustus Scarborough; then he began to look about him. Then dim ideas of the charms and immediate wealth of Miss Thoroughbung flitted before his eyes, and he told himself again and again of the prospects and undoubted good birth of Miss Puffle. Miss Puffle had disgraced herself, and therefore he had thrown Buston Hall at the feet of Miss Thoroughbung.

But now he had heard stories about that "excellent young man, Augustus Scarborough," which had shaken his faith. He had been able to exclaim indignantly that Harry Annesley had told a lie. "A lie!" He had been surprised to find that a young man who had lived so much in the fashionable world as Captain Scarborough had cared nothing for this. And as Miss Thoroughbung became more and more exacting in regard to money, he thought, himself, less and less of the lie. It might be well that Harry should ultimately have the property, though he should never again be taken into favour, and there

should be no further question of the allowance. As Miss Thoroughbung reiterated her demands for the ponies, he began to feel that the acres of Buston would not be disgraced for ever by the telling of that lie. But the sermons remained, and he would never willingly again see his nephew. As he turned all this in his mind, the idea of spending what was left of the winter at Cairo returned to him. He would go to Cairo for the winter, and to the Italian lakes for the spring, and to Switzerland for the summer. Then he might return to Cairo. At the present moment Buston Hall and the neighbourhood of Buntingford had few charms for him. He was afraid that Miss Thoroughbung would not give way about the ponies ;—and against the ponies he was resolved.

He was sitting in this state with a map before him, and with the squire's letter upon the map, when Matthew, the butler, opened the door and announced a visitor. As soon as Mr. Barry had gone, he had supported nature by a mutton-chop and a glass of sherry, and the débris were now lying on the side-table. His first idea was to bid Matthew at once remove the glass and the bone, and the unfinished potato, and the crust of bread. To be taken with such remnants by any visitor would be bad, but by this visitor would be dreadful. Lunch should be eaten in the dining-room, where chop bones and dirty glasses would be in their place. But here in his book-room they would be disgraceful. But then as Matthew was hurriedly collecting the two plates and the salt-cellar, his master began to doubt whether this visitor should be received at all. It was no other than Miss Thoroughbung.

Mr. Prosper, in order to excuse his slackness in calling on the lady, had let it be known that he was not quite well, and Miss Thoroughbung had responded to this move by offering her services as nurse to her lover. He had then written to herself that though he had been a little unwell, "suffering from a cold in the chest, to which at this inclement season of the year it was peculiarly liable," he was not in need of anything beyond a little personal attention, and would not trouble her for those services, for the offer of which he was bound to be peculiarly grateful. Thus he had thought to keep Miss Thoroughbung at a distance. But here she was, with those hated ponies at his very door. "Matthew," he said, making a confidant,

in the distress of the moment, of his butler, "I don't think I can see her."

"You must, sir; indeed you must."

"Must?"

"Well; yes; I'm afraid so. Considering all things; the matrimonial prospects and the rest of it, I think you must, sir."

"She hasn't a right to come here, you know,—as yet." It will be understood that Mr. Prosper was considerably discomposed when he spoke with such familiar confidence to his servants. "She needn't come in here, at any rate."

"In the drawing-room, if I might be allowed to suggest, sir."

"Show Miss Thoroughbung into the drawing-room," said he with all his dignity. Then Matthew retired, and the Squire of Buston felt that five minutes might be allowed to collect himself. And the mutton-chop bone need not be removed.

When the five minutes were over, with slow steps he walked across the intervening billiard-room, and slowly opened the drawing-room door. Would she rush into his arms, and kiss him again, as he entered? He sincerely hoped that there would be no such attempt; but if there were, he was sternly resolved to repudiate it. There should be nothing of the kind till she had clearly declared, and had put it under writing by herself and her lawyers, that she would consent to come to Buston without the ponies. But there was no such attempt. "How do you do, Mr. Prosper?" she said in a loud voice, standing up in the middle of the room. "Why don't you ever come and see me? I take it very ill of you; and so does Miss Tickle. There is no one more partial to you than Miss Tickle. We were talking of you only last night over a despatched crab that we had for supper." Did they have despatched crabs for supper every night? thought Mr. Prosper to himself. It was certainly a strong reason against his marriage. "I told her that you had a cold in your head."

"In my chest," said Mr. Prosper meekly.

"'Bother colds,' said Miss Tickle. 'When people are keeping company together they ought to see each other.' Those were Miss Tickle's very words."

That it should be said of him, Mr. Prosper, of Buston, that he was "keeping company" with any woman! He almost resolved, on the spur of the moment, that under no circumstances could he now marry Miss Thoroughbung. But unfor-

tunately his offer had been made, and the terms of the settlement, as suggested by himself, placed in the hands of his lawyer. If Miss Thoroughbung chose to hold him to his offer, he must marry her. It was not that he feared an action for breach of promise, but that, as a gentleman, it would behove him to be true to his word. He need not, however, marry Miss Tickle. He had offered no terms in respect to Miss Tickle. With great presence of mind, he resolved at once that Miss Tickle should never find a permanent resting-place for her foot at Buston Hall. "I am extremely indebted to Miss Tickle," said he.

"Why haven't you come over just to have a little chat in a friendly way? It's all because of those stupid lawyers, I suppose. What need you and I care for the lawyers? They can do their work without troubling us, except that they will be sure to send in their bills fast enough."

"I have had Mr. Barry, from the firm of Messrs. Grey and Barry, of Lincoln's Inn, with me this morning."

"I know you have. I saw the little man at Soames and Simpson's, and drove out here immediately, after five minutes' conversation. Now, Mr. Prosper, you must let me have those ponies."

That was the very thing which he was determined not to do. The ponies grew in imagination, and became enormous horses capable of consuming any amount of oats. Mr. Prosper was not of a stingy nature, but he had already perceived that his escape, if it were effected, must be made good by means of those ponies. A steady old pair of carriage-horses had been kept by him, and by his father before him, and he was not going to be driven out of the old family ways by a brewer's daughter. And he had, but that morning, instructed his lawyer to stand out against the ponies. He felt that this was the moment for firmness. Now, this instant, he must be staunch, or he would be saddled with this woman,—and with Miss Tickle,—for the whole of his life. She had left him no time for consideration, but had come upon him as soon almost as the words spoken to the lawyer had been out of his mouth. But he would be firm. Miss Thoroughbung opened out instantly about the ponies, and he at once resolved that he would be firm. But was it not very indelicate on her part to come to him and to press him in this manner? He began to hope that she also would be firm about the ponies, and that

in this way the separation might be effected. At the present moment he stood dumb. Silence would not in this case be considered as giving consent. "Now, like a good man, do say that I shall have the ponies," she continued. "I can keep 'em out of my own money, you know, if that's all." He perceived at once that the offer amounted to a certain yielding on her part, but he was no longer anxious that she should give way. "Do'ee now say yes, like a dear old boy." She came closer to him, and took hold of his arm, as though she were going to perform that other ceremony. But he was fully aware of the danger. If there came to be kissing between them it would be impossible for him to go back afterwards, in such a manner but that the blame of the kiss should rest with him. When he should desire to be "off," he could not plead that the kissing had been all her doing. A man in Mr. Prosper's position has difficulties among which he must be very wary. And then the ridicule of the world is so strong a weapon, and is always used on the side of the women! He gave a little start, but he did not at once shake her off. "What's the objection to the ponies, dear?"

"Two pair of horses! It's more than we ought to keep." He should not have said "we." He felt, when it was too late, that he should not have said "we."

"They aren't horses."

"It's the same as far as the stables are concerned."

"But there's room enough, Lord bless you! I've been in to look. I can assure you that Dr. Stubbs says they are required for my health. You ask him else. It's just what I'm up to,—is driving. I've only taken to them lately, and I cannot bring myself to give 'em up. Do'ee, love. You're not going to throw over your own Matilda for a couple of little beasts like that!"

Every word that came out of her mouth was an offence. But he could not tell her so; nor could he reject her on that score. He should have thought beforehand what kind of words might probably come out of her mouth. Was her name Matilda? Of course he knew the fact. Had any one asked him he could have said, with two minutes' consideration, that her name was Matilda. But it had never become familiar to his ears, and now she spoke of it as though he had called her Matilda since their earliest youth. And to be called "Love!" It might be very nice

when he had first called her "Love" a dozen times. But now it sounded extravagant,—and almost indelicate. And he was about to throw her over for a couple of little beasts. He felt that that was his intention, and he blushed because it was so. He was a true gentleman, who would not willingly depart from his word. If he must go on with the ponies he must. But he had never yet yielded about the ponies. He felt now that they were his only hope. But as the difficulties of his position pressed upon him, the sweat stood out upon his brow. She saw it all and understood it all, and deliberately determined to take advantage of his weakness. "I don't think that there is anything else astray between us. We've settled about the jointure;—four hundred a year. It's too little, Soames and Simpson say; but I'm soft and in love, you know." Here she leered at him, and he began to hate her. "You oughtn't to want a third of my income, you know. But you're to be lord and master, and you must have your own way. All that's settled."

"There is Miss Tickle," he said in a voice that was almost cadaverous.

"Miss Tickle is of course to come. You said that from the very first moment when you made the offer."

"Never!"

"Oh, Peter, how can you say so!" He shrank visibly from the sound of his own christian-name. But she determined to persevere. The time must come when she should call him Peter, and why not commence the practice now at once? Lovers always do call each other Peter and Matilda. She wasn't going to stand any nonsense, and if he intended to marry her, and use a large proportion of her fortune, Peter he should be to her. "You did, Peter. You know you told me how much attached you were to her."

"I didn't say anything about her coming with you."

"Oh, Peter, how can you be so cruel? Do you mean to say that you will deprive me of the friend of my youth?"

"At any rate, there shall never be a pony come into my yard." He knew when he made this assertion that he was abandoning his objection to Miss Tickle. She had called him cruel, and his conscience told him that, if he received Miss Thoroughbung and refused admission to Miss Tickle, he would be cruel. Miss Tickle, for aught that he knew, might have been the friend of her youth. At any rate, they had been

constant companions for many years. Therefore, as he had another solid ground on which to stand, he could afford to yield as to Miss Tickle. But as he did so, he remembered that Miss Tickle had accused him of "keeping company," and he declared to himself that it would be impossible to live in the same house with her.

"But Miss Tickle may come," said Miss Thoroughbung. Was the solid ground—the rock, as he believed it to be, of the ponies, about to sink beneath his feet? "Say that Miss Tickle may come. I should be nothing without Miss Tickle. You cannot be so hard-hearted as that."

"I don't see what is the good of talking about Miss Tickle, till we have come to some settlement about the ponies. You say that you must have the ponies. To tell you the truth, Miss Thoroughbung, I don't like any such word as 'must.' And a good many things have occurred to me."

"What kind of things, deary?"

"I think you are inclined to be—gay."

"Me! gay!"

"While I am sober, and perhaps a little grave in my manners of life. I am thinking only of domestic happiness, while your mind is intent upon social circles. I fear that you would look for your bliss abroad."

"In France, or Germany?"

"When I say abroad, I mean out of your own house. There is perhaps some discrepancy of taste of which I ought earlier to have taken cognisance."

"Nothing of the kind," said Miss Thoroughbung. "I am quite content to live at home, and do not want to go abroad, either to France, nor yet to any other English county. I should never ask for anything, unless it be for a single month in London."

Here was a ground upon which he perhaps could make his stand. "Quite impossible," said Mr. Prosper.

"Or for a fortnight," said Miss Thoroughbung.

"I never go up to London except on business."

"But I might go alone, you know,—with Miss Tickle. I shouldn't want to drag you away. I have always been in the habit of having a few weeks in London about the Exhibition time."

"I shouldn't wish to be left by my wife."

"Of course we could manage all that. We're not to settle every little thing beforehand, and put it into the deeds. A precious sum we should have to pay the lawyers."

"It's as well we should understand each other."

"I think it pretty nearly is all settled that has to go into the deeds. I thought I'd just run over after seeing Mr. Barry, and give the final touch. If you'll give way, dear, about Miss Tickle and the ponies, I'll yield in everything else. Nothing surely can be fairer than that."

He knew that he was playing the hypocrite, and he knew also that it did not become him as a gentleman to be false to a woman. He was aware that from minute to minute, and almost from word to word, he was becoming ever more and more averse to this match which he had proposed to himself. And he knew that in honesty he ought to tell her that it was so. It was not honest in him to endeavour to get rid of her by a side blow, as it were. And yet this was the attempt which he had hitherto been making. But how was he to tell her the truth? Even Mr. Barry had not understood the state of his mind. Indeed, his mind had altered since he had seen Mr. Barry. He had heard within the last half-hour many words spoken by Miss Thoroughbung, which proved that she was altogether unfit to be his wife. It was a dreadful misfortune that he should have rushed into such peril; but was he not bound as a gentleman to tell her the truth? "Say that I shall have Jemima Tickle!" The added horrors of the christian-name operated upon him with additional force. Was he to be doomed to have the word Jemima holloaed about his rooms and staircases for the rest of his life? And she had given up the ponies, and was taking her stand upon Miss Tickle, as to whom at last he would be bound to give way. He could see now that he should have demanded her whole income, and have allowed her little or no jointure. That would have been grasping, monstrous, altogether impracticable; but it would not have been ungentlemanlike. This chaffering about little things was altogether at variance with his tastes;—and it would be futile. He must summon courage to tell her that he no longer wished for the match;—but he could not do it on this morning. Then,—for that morning,—some benign god preserved him.

Matthew came into the room and whispered into his ear that a gentleman wished to see him. "What gentleman?" Matthew again whispered that it was his brother-in-law. "Show him in," said Mr. Prosper with a sudden courage. He had

not seen Mr. Annesley since the day of his actual quarrel with Harry. "I shall have the ponies," said Miss Thoroughbung during the moment that was allowed to her.

"We are interrupted now. I am afraid that the rest of this interview must be postponed." It should never be renewed, though he might have to leave the country for ever. Of that he gave himself assurance. Then the parson was shown into the room.

The constrained introduction was very painful to Mr. Prosper, but was not at all disagreeable to the lady. "Mr. Annesley knows me very well. We are quite old friends. Joe is going to marry his eldest girl. I hope Molly is quite well." The rector said that Molly was quite well. When he had come away from home just now he had left Joe at the parsonage. "You'll find him there a deal oftener than at the brewery," said Miss Thoroughbung. "You know what we're going to do, Mr. Annesley. There are no fools like old fools." A thunder-black cloud came across Mr. Prosper's face. That this woman should dare to call him an old fool! "We were discussing a few of our future arrangements. We've arranged everything about money in the most amicable manner, and now there is merely a question of a pair of ponies."

"We need not trouble Mr. Annesley about that, I think."

"And Miss Tickle! I'm sure the rector will agree with me that old friends like me and Miss Tickle ought not to be separated. And it isn't as though there was any dislike between them, because he has already said that he finds Miss Tickle charming."

"Damn Miss Tickle," he said;—whereupon the rector looked astonished, and Miss Thoroughbung jumped a foot from off the ground. "I beg the lady's pardon," said Mr. Prosper piteously, "and yours, Miss Thoroughbung;—and yours, Mr. Annesley." It was as though a new revelation of character had been given. No one, except Matthew, had ever heard the Squire of Boston swear. And with Matthew the cursings had been by no means frequent, and had been addressed generally to some article of his clothing or to some morsel of food prepared with less than the usual care. But now the oath had been directed against a female, and the chosen friend of his betrothed. And it had been uttered in the presence of a clergyman, his brother-in-law, and the

rector of his parish. Mr. Prosper felt that he was disgraced for ever. Could he have overheard them laughing over his ebullition in the rectory drawing-room half an hour afterwards, and almost praising his violence, some part of the pain might have been removed. As it was he felt at the time that he was disgraced for ever.

"We will return to the subject when next we meet," said Miss Thoroughbung.

"I am very sorry that I should so far have forgotten myself," said Mr. Prosper, "but—"

"It does not signify;—not as far as I am concerned;" and she made a little motion to the clergyman, half bow and half curtsy. Mr. Annesley bowed in return, as though declaring that neither did it signify very much as far as he was concerned. Then she left the room, and Matthew handed her into the carriage, when she took the ponies in hand with quite as much composure as though her friend had not been sworn at.

"Upon my word, sir," said Prosper as soon as the door was shut, "I beg your pardon. But I was so moved by certain things which have occurred that I was carried much beyond my usual habits."

"Don't mention it."

"It is peculiarly distressing to me, that I should have been induced to forget myself in the presence of a clergyman of the parish and my brother-in-law. But I must beg you to forget it."

"Oh, certainly. I will tell you now why I have come over."

"I can assure you that such is not my habit," continued Mr. Prosper, who was thinking much more of the unaccustomed oath which he had sworn, than of his brother-in-law's visit, strange as it was. "No one as a rule is more guarded in his expressions than I am. How it should have come to pass that I was so stirred I can hardly tell. But Miss Thoroughbung had said certain words which had moved me very much." She had called him "Peter," and "deary," and had spoken of him as "keeping company" with her. All these disgusting terms of endearment he could not repeat to his brother-in-law; but felt it necessary to allude to them.

"I trust that you may be happy with her, when she is your wife."

"I can't say. I really don't know. It's a very important step to take at my age; and I am not quite sure that I should be doing wisely."

"It's not too late," said Mr. Annesley.

"I don't know. I can't quite say." Then Mr. Prosper drew himself up, remembering that it would not become him to discuss the matter of his marriage with the father of his heir.

"I have come over here," said Mr. Annesley, "to say a few words about Harry." Mr. Prosper again drew himself up. "Of course you're aware that Harry is at present living with us." Here Mr. Prosper bowed. "Of course, in his altered circumstances, it will not do that he shall be idle, and yet he does not like to take a final step without letting you know what it is." Here Mr. Prosper bowed twice. "There is a gentleman of fortune going out to the United States on a mission which will probably occupy him for four or five years. I am not exactly warranted in mentioning his name; but he has taken in hand a political project of much importance." Again Mr. Prosper bowed. "Now, he has offered to Harry the place of private secretary, on condition that Harry will undertake to stay the entire term. He is to have a salary of three hundred a year, and his travelling expenses will of course be paid for him. If he goes, poor boy, he will in all probability remain in his new home and become a citizen of the United States. Under these circumstances, I have thought it best to step up and tell you in a friendly manner what his plans are." Then he had told his tale, and Mr. Prosper again bowed.

The rector had been very crafty. There was no doubt about the wealthy gentleman with the American project, and the salary had been offered. But in other respects there had been some exaggeration. It was well known to the rector that Mr. Prosper regarded America and all her institutions with a religious hatred. An American was to him an ignorant, impudent, foul-mouthed, fraudulent creature, to have any acquaintance with whom was a disgrace. Could he have had his way, he would have reconstituted the United States as British Colonies at a moment's notice. Were he to die without having begotten another heir, Buxton must become the property of Harry Annesley; and it would be dreadful to him to think that Buxton should be owned by an American citizen. "The salary offered is too good to be abandoned," said Mr. Annesley when he saw the effect which his story had produced.

"Everything is going against me," exclaimed Mr. Prosper.

"Well; I will not talk about that. I did

not come here to discuss Harry or his sins ;—nor, for the matter of that, his virtues. But I felt it would be improper to let him go upon his journey without communicating with you." So saying he took his departure, and walked back to the rectory.

CHRONICLES OF ENGLISH COUNTIES.

NORTHUMBERLAND. PART I.

AWAY to the north ! Whirling through the green fields and broad plough lands, just pausing to take breath at Peterborough, and then once more away through the fat plains of Lincolnshire. Presently we darted over a long low bridge, with a river below running full and turbid between soppy, reedy banks—and beyond, a wide plain, wet and watery, with a sad lowering sky. "Pardon me," at this moment said a quiet pale man, like a professor, who had so far not spoken a word. "Pardon me, but that river is—" "The Trent," responded curtly a commercial-looking passenger opposite. "Ah, then," said the other in an undertone, more to himself than his companion, "we may consider ourselves now in Northumberland." The commercial man wrinkled up his nose in a humorous way. "Pray, may I ask what you consider the boundaries of Northumberland ?" "Roughly speaking, the country lying between the Trent and the Forth," replied the pale man with the air of one accustomed to give information. The other laughed a little scornfully. "Then, since you were at school, it appears to have shrunk a good bit."

And no doubt the commercial man was right. Since the days the professor had in his mind—the days of the old English Kingdom of Northumbria, when York was its capital, and Edinburgh a frontier town—since those days indeed Northumberland has shrunk and shrivelled up, and there is still a long journey before us ere we reach the gateway of Northumberland, that new castle on the Tyne, which Robert the Norman built when there were only a few scattered huts on a site where is now one of the commercial capitals of the north.

But in a busy hive like Newcastle the past seems to sink into insignificance before the teeming life of the present. The chronicles that would suit the genius of the place would tell of its Stephensons and Armstrongs, the history of coal and iron and

the progress of mechanics. The shell of the feudal fortress, not hoary so much as grimy, intended to guard the passage of the Tyne, is mocked at by huge bridges where trains roar and clank, while on the banks innumerable chimneys from the iron-works, the glass-works, the potteries, the lead-works, and oil-mills—whatever industry is smoky and smothery in its processes finds here a chosen home—contribute to the lurid gloom that hangs about the city as a garment. Then there are the keels that float up and down with the tide, in long flotillas; with perhaps a fragile racing skiff darting skilfully through the press. In all this we have no trace of ancient Northumberland, the borderland with its gloom of mountain and fell, with its sparkling streams and ancient fortalices, the land of moss-troopers and hardy borderers, of men-at-arms, and archers ever on the watch for the beacon-fires that may tell of raid and invasion.

It is different as we pass along the iron-bound coast, where the sea sweeps roaring in upon the wall of rocks and rises high in spray and foam, where ancient ruins frown from the shapeless rocks, and here and there in some gap in the stern barrier the smoke from a fisher-cottage relieves the sombre desolation of the scene. Here the breeze blows, pure and fresh, from the very sources of the winds. Here the past assumes a distinct importance of its own. Among the little towns, and about the old churches and border towers, the footsteps of time have not been effaced by a crowd of events. Whatever deeds were done here lang syne, little has happened since to disturb their memory. The old names, too, still remain—the names, if nothing else, of the powerful families who have reigned here in almost undisputed sovereignty. The Percys still are lords paramount over hill and dale, and the Greys are counted among the best now as in the days of the Plantagenets.

And yet people hardly visit Northumberland. They stop short of it, reaching only as far as Scarborough, or perhaps at farthest Whitby. Or they pass through it, aiming for Scotland, which is hardly more picturesque, and is certainly without the same historic interest. For who, after Macbeth, cares much about the Scottish kings ? and put the Stuarts in the balance with the Percys, and but for crown and royal trappings thrown in, which would kick the beam ?

And so, while others rush on, let us make for Bamborough—

King Ida's castle, huge and square—

the mother-town of all the Northumbrian land. Mother-town though it be, its own children hardly know it; in vain you look for it in Bradshaw; but the roadside station of Lucken is about four miles from the village—a village which might be a pleasant, flourishing little watering-place, if its growth were permitted; but which is kept within its present bounds with an Elizabethan severity by those who rule its destinies. Beyond this village in swaddling clothes rises the square keep of the castle, reminding one somewhat in form and emplacement of Dover, the fortifications exciting a little wonder at their size and extent, considering how little there seems to guard. And from Bamborough tower what a grand sweep of sea and land! The sea most attractive perhaps—its bosom speckled with passing sails, the horizon lost in the distant haze, the haze out of which came the long war-ships of the invaders, when first the English came into the land.

And from this point, hand to hand and foot to foot, the fight was carried on, the Britons fighting for home and everything dear to them, while the Saxons fiercely struggled on for dear life, with heroic deeds and fell slaughters, alike unrecorded and forgotten. But for the fair-haired men came constantly fresh ship-loads of warriors from beyond seas, and so, step by step, the English advanced and the Britons retreated, till at last came Ida the flame-bearer—flames for the houses and churches, for the barns and stables, everywhere fire, death, and extermination in this fierce struggle of race against race. Then, by-and-by, the Britons retired sullenly to their fastnesses among the Pennine Hills; while Ida built a home and fort on this impregnable rock to which he gave the name of his wife Bebba, and which was ever after known as Bebbanberg; and from this stronghold the tide of victory ran on till the fierce Northumbrians had carried fire and sword right across the land as far as Chester, where they won a great victory, the sad fame of which still lives in the mournful legends of Wales. And soon after this, under Edwin, the founder of Edinburgh, the Northumbrian kingdom flourished for a while in prosperity. Edwin brought home a wife from the more civilised and settled kingdom of Kent, and in the train of his wife came monks from Canterbury, at the

head of whom was Paulinus, the great missionary of the north. Then, the king once converted, Northumbria became Christian en masse, Paulinus baptising by thousands in the rivers; and we read of a sort of golden age in the rugged north, with fountains by the wayside for the refreshment of weary travellers, and drinking-cups of brass hung up thereby which none cared to steal, anticipating the drinking-fountains of the nineteenth century by more than twelve hundred years.

But soon to all this prosperity there is a terrible check. A great warrior was king of the heathen midland English, and allied with Cadwallon, the doughty British chieftain of the still unconquered kingdom of Strathclyde. They overran all Northumbria, defeating and slaying the proud Edwin in a great battle. Paulinus escaped with Edwin's queen, reached a ship and sailed away to South England, whence he ventured not forth again, but was made Bishop of Rochester, died, and was buried there. All was not yet lost, however, for Northumbria. A king was found of a rival race, who gathered up the scattered elements of resistance, and in one supreme effort vanquished the Britons and killed their valiant king Cadwallon. The forces of the English were greatly inferior to those of their enemy, and much of the credit of the victory was ascribed to the power of a miraculous cross which the king had erected as his standard. Oswald lost no time in showing his gratitude for the miraculous intervention of the heavenly powers, and sent to the sacred island of Iona begging for some holy man to be sent to instruct his people in the faith; the priests from Canterbury having mostly fled the country with their leader Paulinus.

From Iona Aidan was sent, to found a second Iona on the bleak northern coast. Here from the castle wall the island thus colonised, ever since called Holy, is to be seen; the farthest and largest of the group that lie there like sea-birds floating on the waves. For a time the Christianity of Northumbria became distinctly Scotch or Celtic, differing from the faith introduced by the Roman missionaries in the south on several points of ritual, and on many points of sentiment and practice. Something of Eastern simplicity, an asceticism rather of temperament than of discipline; a love of seclusion and reverie, with a deep sense of community with Nature in her wildest and loneliest scenes; a kind of feminine sympathy with weak-

ness and distress ; these are the striking features of the disciples of St. Columba.

In Oswald, the king, the men from Iona found a congenial spirit. Here, at a feast, held, no doubt, within this very enclosure, King Oswald shared his dinner with a wandering beggar, and gave his silver dish as a way-penny ; and here the holy Aidan blessed the generous giver. "Never may that right arm perish !" he cried ; but, alas ! the prayer, if granted at all, was granted only to the ear, for soon after Oswald was slain in battle by the fierce Penda of Mercia. But then the relics of the king were collected, and the generous right arm was enclosed in a shrine within the church of this castle of Bamborough, though this must have been long after, for at the time Penda was ravaging all the country, and had even set siege to Bebbanberg, where chiefs and mighty men of the land had collected for one desperate stand. And from his barren island-home the good Aidan watched the progress of the heathen invader in the smoke of burning houses and churches. But as long as the king's town held out all was not yet lost. And then Penda, it is said, despairing of storming the stockade defended by such brave hearts, collected from far and near the ruins of cottages and halls, timber, thatch, and wattles, which he heaped up in one huge pile against the castle mound. And then, setting it on fire, the black suffocating smoke settled in choking volumes on the devoted town, and drifted out to sea in a huge portentous column. St. Aidan watched it from his cell, and in the bitterness of his heart cried out : "Lord, see what ill this heathen Penda doth." And then we are told that the wind suddenly veered ; the great suffocating serpent was slowly swept back and away — away from the walls of the heaven-protected city and back upon the godless heathen, whose loud triumphant cries just now had seemed the death-note of the Northumbrian braves.

From this moment the annals of Bamborough are for a time obscure. The tide of Northumbrian conquest flowed once more, and the successor of the sainted Oswald ruled over a kingdom even more extensive than that indicated by the professor when we crossed the Trent. Lincoln was his, and Carlisle, with ancient York for a capital, and thus Bebbanberg was abandoned as a kingly seat. In the tenth century the Danes spoiled castle and town, but the Norman kings saw the advantage

of the position—giving a landing-place and a hold in a debateable turbulent land—and the present strong and massive keep was built, probably almost simultaneously with the White Tower of London. The castle was held for Robert de Mowbray when in rebellion against Rufus, and the Red King besieged it with all his power, building up against it a huge wooden tower, called appropriately Malvoisin. But the castled rock was like to have proved too strong for him, when Mowbray, who had been fighting elsewhere, was taken prisoner, and, to save his eyes from the hot irons the king had ready for him, ordered the castle to be surrendered. From that time it seems to have been held as a royal castle, and its name — now Baenberg — occurs frequently in the royal accounts of expenses.

Later on the castle formed a temporary refuge for Gaveston, the favourite of Edward the Second ; in a subsequent reign the Percys held it for the king ; and in the Wars of the Roses it was one of the strong places of the Lancastrian party in the north. When the loss of the battle of Hexham had left the Red Rose helpless in the north, Sir Ralph Grey, one of the leaders of the cause, threw himself into the castle, hoping, perhaps, to hold out till help should come from France. But King Edward assailed him "cum maximis bombardis," and the old walls were presently tumbling about the ears of the defenders. Sir Ralph himself was crushed under the ruins of a fallen tower, as the roar of the king's artillery sounded the knell of the great baronage of England and their strong castles. And just as the great bombards of Edward the Fourth left it, so the castle remained, ruined and dismantled, for many centuries. Elizabeth granted it to the Forsters, and Thomas Forster lost it in 1715, for his share in the Jacobite rising. The property was purchased by the then Bishop of Durham, Lord Crewe, a relative of Forster's, who left it at his death to trustees for the purposes of a somewhat original charity, thus described by Captain Grose, who writes : "In the year 1757, the trustees for Lord Crewe's charity began the repairs of Bamborough Tower under the direction of Dr. Sharp, when it was fitted up for the reception of the poor. The upper parts were formed into granaries, whence in times of scarcity corn is sold to the indigent, without any distinction, at four shillings per bushel. A hall and

some apartments are reserved by the doctor, who frequently resides here to see that his noble plan is properly executed.

"Among the distressed who find alleviation by the judicious disposition of this charity, are the mariners navigating this dangerous coast, for whose benefit a constant watch is kept on the top of the tower, from whence signals are given to the fishermen of Holy Island when any ship is discovered in distress. Besides this, in every great storm, two men on horseback patrol the adjacent coast from sunset to sunrise, who in case of any shipwreck are to give immediate notice at the castle. The shipwrecked mariner finds a hospitable reception, and is here maintained for a week or longer, and the bodies of the drowned are decently buried."

Thus it is that the old tower of Bamborough wears such a cheerful habitable look, for with some modifications the charity still continues its useful work. Popular tradition, with some lingering memories of the former greatness of the site, has embellished the castle with a wonderful legend, drawn from the folklore of the race, of a certain loathly worm or serpent which had been thus transformed from a beautiful princess by the spiteful queen and enchantress her stepmother—a worm that drank every day the milk of seven cows, and threatened the ruin of the north countree. The Child of Wynd, the Perseus of the drama, sets out to deliver the country with his companions.

They built a ship without delay
With masts of the rowan-tree.

The queen's magical arts are powerless against the rowan-tree, and the Child lands in safety under Bamborough towers, and, sword in hand, encounters the worm, which speaks him fair, however, in these mysterious words :

Oh, quit thy sword and bend thy bow,
And give me kisses three;
If I am not won ere the sun go down,
Won I shall never be.

The Child overcomes a certain natural antipathy to a personage at once so coming on and forbidding. He gives the worm the kisses demanded, whereupon :

She crept into the hole a worm, but stopt out a lady.

As, however, the lady is entirely without apparel, a slight embarrassment ensues, which is ended by the Child throwing his cloak over the lady, and they proceed in company to the castle where the wicked

queen is discomfited, and finally turned into a toad. The uncouth poem finishes :

This fact now Duncan Fraser,
Of Cheviot, sings in rhyme,
Lest Bambrughshire men should forget
Some part of it in time.

If we linger over Bamborough it is because no other place seems so characteristic of old Northumberland; with its stern coastline, the sea with its mingled brightness and gloom, the white sails, the islands with their clouds of sea-fowl. Yonder breed the eider duck, which are known as St. Cuthbert's chicks, and on the beach may be picked up those fossil Entrochi that children still call St. Cuthbert's beads, while the tradition is still extant which excited the curiosity of the holy sisterhood in Marmion.

But fair St. Hilda's nuns would learn
If on a rock by Lindisfarn,
St. Cuthbert sits and toils to frame
The sea-born beads that bear his name.

For Cuthbert was of the Holy Island there—less familiarly known as Lindisfarne. A shepherd-boy tending his flock upon the hills, he saw St. Aidan in a vision, who sent him to Melrose Priory, then an offshoot of Iona, where he remained fifteen years. Then he was made prior of Lindisfarne, where he earned such a reputation for sanctity, that the Evil One became jealous of his fame, and tried a fall with him in vain. Over hills and fells he loved to wander, preaching to the poor—by nature a dreamer and recluse. The lonely priory on the barren rock was too gay and populous an abode for him, and he retired to a narrow cell on one of the nearer islands known as the House Island—now adorned by two tall lighthouses—where there are still scattered remains of a chapel and a stone coffin in which it is said the saint would take a voyage as in a boat. From his retirement he was called to assume the episcopal staff and ring, as Bishop of Lindisfarne, but, after two years of unsought dignity, he retired once more to his beloved solitude and there died. The posthumous adventures of the saint are more remarkable than the incidents of his secluded life. His relics remained in their original shrine at Lindisfarne for more than a century, when the heathen Northmen made a descent upon the then rich and prosperous monastery. Some of the monks escaped with what they deemed their most precious treasure, the wonder-working relics of their saint. The subsequent adventures of these emigrants, and their settlement at Durham, hardly belong

to the chronicles of Northumberland, but strange to say, after a couple of centuries' absence, the bones of the saint once more revisited their original resting-place. This time it was Norman William who was ravaging the north, and the monks of Durham had fled from the terror of his name, and taken refuge in Lindisfarne. They soon returned, however, finding the Conqueror not ill-disposed to their fraternity, and William stayed his course of fire and rapine before he reached the frontiers of our county, a fact attributed by the religious to the influence of the saint who

Turn'd the Conqueror back again
When with his Norman Bowyer band
He came to waste Northumberland.

On Lindisfarne there are still considerable remains of the ancient priory, not of Cuthbert's time indeed, but of the respectable antiquity of the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. The island can be reached at low water by crossing the sands, a fact noticed by Baeda the venerable, in his Ecclesiastical History, which shows anyhow that the coast level has not materially changed in the last thousand years. It is here that Scott in *Marmion* places the ghastly incident of the nun immured alive for breach of her vows of chastity—an incident possible a few centuries earlier, but hardly in keeping with the manners of the sixteenth century. But the island and its remains are interesting as the Iona of the eastern coast, the especially Holy Island, a storehouse for the bones of early Northumbrian kings, and the first station of missionary enterprise among the heathen of the north. The influence of the early Celtic Church soon waned indeed in the presence of the more powerful organisation of Rome, and it was a monk of Lindisfarne, himself originally a disciple of the Scottish Cult, who was the chief agent in the discomfiture of the men from Iona; a man who shines out distinctly from the dim records of the past, as the agent of civilisation and mundane culture in opposition to the faith of solitude and reverie. Wilfrid, the stirring Bishop of Northumbria, after spending his youth at Lindisfarne, had completed his ecclesiastical training at Rome, and returned to Northumbria determined to bring his native country into the Roman usage. The Scottish monks, it will be remembered, had their own time for the keeping of Easter, and shaved their heads in a crescent shape from ear to ear, instead of in a round patch on the crown, as was and

is the orthodox method. A great synod was held at Whitby to settle these points, when the influence of Wilfrid prevailed, and the king, who presided, declared for the Church of St. Peter, for the orthodox Easter, and the circular tonsure. At that, the Scotch abbot sorrowfully abandoned Lindisfarne and returned to his own country, with such of his followers as adhered to their ancient rites. Many, however, conformed to the Roman usage, the famous Cuthbert among the rest, and good St. Chad, whose fame still lives at Lichfield, and whose name, indeed, is connected with wells and fountains all over the land.

Long after Cuthbert's time, Lindisfarne was the seat of a bishopric, and bishop, abbot, and monks lived together in peace; but when the Danes descended upon the land, they swept away monastery, bishopric, diocese, and all. From that time we hear no more of Lindisfarne, till the monks of Durham, some time before the Conquest, visited the desolate ruins and decided on planting an offshoot of their abbey in the island.

The existing ruins are the remains of the church of this priory, whose history is for the future bound up with that of the present house of Durham. Near the ruins of the priory are the remains of an ancient castle, on a curious conical mound, about which history is silent, except that it was occupied by a small royal garrison during the past century, and was captured and held for a few hours on behalf of the Pretender, in 1715.

Leaving Bamborough and its attendant islands, with all the halo of ruin and antiquity about them, keeping along the coast road to the south, we presently come upon the ruins of Dunstanborough Castle, on a precipitous cliff overlooking the sea, and a sweep of wild rugged coast-line. In stormy weather the sea breaks and dashes into the chasms below, and spurts up in sheets of spray with loud roaring and rumbling. The name would seem to indicate that the site was originally fortified by the sturdy English saint Dunstan, who ruled king and kingdom with a firm hand. But the present building was erected by Thomas of Lancaster, grandson of Henry the Third, who was killed at Boroughbridge by the men of King Edward the Second when on his way to his own strong fortress. Later on the castle was held for the Red Rose, and was stormed and demolished by the Yorkists, and remains

pretty much as Edward the Fourth's artillery left it.

Still following the coast, and crossing the mouth of the Aln, we come to the finest of the trio of sea-coast castles, Warkworth, proud of Percy's name. The ruined keep rises nobly from the cliffs, and all round is a magnificent prospect of sea and land. To the north lies the rich cultivated country to Alnwick; westwards are the banks of the Coquet, graced with copse and grove; to the south is an extensive plain inclining towards the sea, crowded with villages and interspersed with woods, the shore indented by little ports and creeks, the higher grounds scattered over with innumerable hamlets, churches, and other buildings. Warkworth is so intimately connected with the Percys that its history is that of the family, which may be more conveniently told at Alnwick. But it will be remembered that Shakespeare places some of his scenes in Henry the Fourth at Warkworth—that charming scene where Lady Percy threatens:

In faith, I'll break thy little finger, Harry,
An' if thou wilt not tell me all things true.

A short three miles of the river is the hermitage of Warkworth, the most perfect thing of its kind in all England, a little lonely hermitage on the river-bank, where it is easy to believe in the tradition that tells how it was cut out of the solid rock—its chapel, cell, and rude devotional figures—in expiation of unpardoned crime, by the last of the ancient family of Bertram, a family more ancient even than the Percys.

"WAS IT SUCCESS?"

A STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS. CHAPTER IV.

"ROSA, I see another invitation upstairs from the Hardings. Let me repeat to you that I do not sanction your going there."

Dr. Macdonald addressed himself to his wife, who sat opposite him at the dinner-table, well-dressed and silent.

She hardly ate at all, but amused herself by crumpling her bread between her thin white fingers.

The six years which had elapsed since their marriage had left the husband colder and more imperious than ever, and had taken away from the wife all that "beauté du diable" which she had enjoyed for so short a period. Her cheeks were hollow, and her colour unnaturally high. She did not look up when her husband spoke, nor did she give the slightest sign that she had heard him.

"The Hardings' rooms are so very draughty," suggested Mrs. Carden apologetically. She was at one side of the table, facing Dr. Teggett. She was always apologetic now in the presence of her son-in-law. She looked towards him before venturing a remark, and seemed to shrink a little under his cold glance.

"Whether the rooms are draughty or not is merely a matter of detail," he answered curtly; "the gist of the matter is that Rosa cannot stand these large entertainments, and I do not intend her to try. I suppose," addressing his wife, "you don't wish to be ill again as you were last winter?"

"You wish it," she said, without looking up, and still crumpling her bread. She spoke with the perversity of ill-health, perhaps half hoping to elicit the warm denial he would have given long ago.

His blue eyes gleamed angrily.

"You are at liberty to make any unreasonable remarks you choose," he said; "but considering the matter even on its lowest grounds, your illness would cause me great inconvenience and expense."

Then the servants came back into the room, and dinner proceeded in silence. Dr. Teggett was used to these little bickerings between husband and wife; he was often at the house. Macdonald had grown to tolerate him, and even to be glad of his company when no one else was there. Any society was preferable to being alone with his wife. Ever since he had discovered, within a year of his marriage, that she was developing consumptive tendencies, his feelings towards her had undergone a singular change. He considered that Mrs. Carden had grossly deceived him, and he never looked at his children without a wave of resentment against their mother; for out of five, two only remained to him, and these were delicate, sickly little boys who seemed very unlikely to survive the course of Spartan treatment to which he subjected them.

"Do have the dear children down to please me," begged Mrs. Carden timidly, so soon as the dessert was brought in.

"As I always have them down to please myself," Dr. Macdonald answered grimly, yet intending a joke, "I see no reason why I should not to-night."

He had a crushing way of answering his mother-in-law's remarks which was not encouraging. Conversation did not flourish at the Macdonalds' table. Rosa, beyond an occasional remark to her mother, never

spoke at all, and Dr. Teggett, who at other times was rather garrulous, looked upon his dinner-hour as too important an event to be lightly broken into by desultory talk.

Two small boys of five and three years old now came into the room, and ran at once up to their mother.

"Come over here, sirs," commanded Dr. Macdonald, and the pair reluctantly went and stood between him and Mrs. Carden.

Rosa seemed almost indifferent to their presence, but the grandmother never let them alone a moment, asking them questions as to their toys and games, and passing them figs and nuts, and sips of wine.

To this Macdonald promptly put a stop.

"Thank your grandmother," he said imperatively to the eldest boy, "and tell her I forbid your touching wine now, or at any other time."

The child faltered with the glass at his lips, and put it down untasted; his father's voice seemed to inspire him with nervous terror.

"Well, sir? Say what I tell you."

"Papa forbids your touching wine now, or at any time," gabbed the little boy timorously.

At this his father laughed abruptly, and taking his son by the shoulders gave him a slight push back to his mother.

"I cannot compliment you on your intelligence," he said in the sarcastic tones children dread; "the little wine you have taken seems to have confused your wits already. Give him a dry biscuit, Rosa, and nothing else. I will not have their teeth ruined with sweets."

Mrs. Carden was not more successful with the younger one whom she had taken on her knee. Sure of her indulgence he made a grab across the table, and upset a finger-glass into a dish of preserved ginger.

"Let that child be removed upstairs," commanded his father, and the culprit was carried howling from the room.

"He is getting most unruly," said Dr. Macdonald; "his mother and grandmother do nothing but spoil him. I shall have to give both these young gentlemen a lesson one day which they won't forget."

His eye rested on Granger, the eldest boy, and the child almost slid under the table with fright; no lesson at least was needed to teach him a proper respect for parental authority.

Mrs. Carden chose the finest orange from the dish, and carefully peeled it;

then she put the pieces on to Rosa's plate, and with nods and smiles invited her grandson to partake. Dr. Macdonald descended to enter into a scientific conversation with his guest, and Rosa leaning back in her chair played abstractedly with her fan. Suddenly the colour flamed up all over her face, and she leaned forward quickly.

Her husband had been laying down the law of anaesthetics, and was just describing with a horrifying minuteness an experiment he had performed that week upon a dog. His son, leaning with his elbows on the table, was listening with an awful fascination, and when Macdonald, in illustration of his point, mentioned how the animal had drawn itself up into knots, the little boy gave a sniggering laugh.

"Granger," cried his mother furiously, "leave the room this instant!"

Dr. Macdonald paused in amazement.

"What has he done?" he asked her.

Anger and disgust were struggling on Rosa's face.

"Leave the room!" she repeated to her son.

The husband frowned.

"Kindly give me a reason for Granger's departure, and I will see that he obeys you."

The boy stood still between the table and the door. He dared not move.

Rosa looked down into her plate and pulled about a bit of grape-stalk. She pressed her shut fan across her mouth to hide its trembling.

"We are all waiting," said Dr. Macdonald with polite irony. "Granger seems likely to take root where he is."

Rosa could not speak, but the tears began to run down her cheeks.

Her husband examined her with cold curiosity.

"Your mother is unwell," he said presently to his son. "She is unable to stand the noise you make. Be off!"

The boy slunk gladly from the room, and so soon as the door was shut his mother broke out passionately:

"I will not have him hear such things; I have told you before I will not have him brutalised. It is too bad; I believe you do it on purpose." And she began to cry.

Macdonald was greatly irritated, and kept silence a few seconds to subdue his temper.

"You are the most unreasonable woman I know," he said coldly. "I wonder you don't say I got up this morning on purpose to make you cry at dinner-time. But

that I believe you are feeling very unwell, I should see no excuse for such conduct. We will come up to coffee in ten minutes' time."

" You see what Rosa is like," said Macdonald when he and his guest were alone. " Unless she has plenty of extraneous excitement she gets into a morbid condition, and either broods or cries, as you saw to-night. I made a great mistake. My domestic life is a miserable failure. The only comfort I get is from my work."

Dr. Teggett found nothing to say. His sympathy was given to Rosa, whose melancholy face had begun during the last few months to impress him painfully.

Macdonald had never before spoken of his private affairs, but to-night something impelled him to speech, if only to shake off the irritation which oppressed him.

" Rosa ought never to have married," he said. " Mrs. Carden behaved most culpably. I have since learned that Rosa's father was consumptive, and both his sisters died of the disease. It is true, as she told me, that he died of fever, but he would probably never have reached middle-age. Oddly enough, about two years ago I came across a man who had attended the M'Kay family for many years when they lived at Portobello. I heard it all from him."

" Poor girl—poor child!" murmured the old man. " I have feared a long time that there was something wrong."

Dr. Macdonald leaned gloomily on the table. He felt that now the subject was broached, he might as well confide the whole of his grievances.

" Rosa is naturally of a morbid, self-questioning disposition, and she does herself great harm by indulging in it. For a time she throws it off by a round of gaiety, until her strength gives way, and in the reaction which follows she is worse than ever. Her mind is narrow and tenacious, and I make out she had a very narrowing education. She liked to believe that all her actions were seen and approved of by a sort of special Providence, and now she torments herself with remorse because she no longer finds comfort in that belief. At least, so I understand her. I have studied her rather closely. At first I endeavoured to give her wider views, but I found it was no use. All women cling to forms and superstitions; they can't face the naked truth; their brain is too poor in quality."

" Ah! ah!" began Dr. Teggett dissentingly, " there are a good many men, too, who won't face the truth as you see it."

" Well, we won't discuss it again," said Macdonald. " You know my views, and we should neither of us ever convince the other. Shall we go upstairs?"

This conversation with Macdonald made a great impression on Dr. Teggett. For a very long time after it he was haunted by Rosa's melancholy face, and often, when rearranging his cabinets and dusting his treasures, he would find himself ruminating over her situation. He began to persuade himself she had never looked happy—not even in the first months of her marriage—perhaps never at all since her childhood. This ingenious hypothesis was based partly on Dr. Macdonald's diagnosis of her character, partly on the apathy for which even her ill-health did not entirely account; but it flourished chiefly on the unforgotten picture of a boisterous laughing girl he had once watched romping over a lawn, and the memory of the passionate kisses she had bestowed on the faded woman who crossed it to fetch her in. Poor Miss Haverson had now been dead three years, and the school was broken up; but Rosa had never cared to revisit it, and never opened her lips on the subject of her early life. The doctor had an odd fancy that perhaps neither he, nor Mrs. Carden, nor any of them, knew the real Rosa—Miss Haverson's Rosa. He remembered the wonderful difference which had struck him, that day so long ago, between the frowning girl who came into the drawing-room at Norwood and the laughing happy one he had seen from the window. Supposing all these years she had, so to speak, been acting a part, because her real tastes and inclinations were so incompatible with her surroundings? Ideas such as these perplexed the doctor very much, and to Mrs. Gibbs he one day hinted some of his doubts. But she gave him very little satisfaction, for she had plenty of problems of her own to perplex her just then. Her beloved Lance, who had been slowly but carefully stepping down the ladder for the last ten years, had just completed the performance with a rush, and kicked the implement over. He had had the indecency to marry a barmaid, and to propose introducing her to his shuddering family.

But what Mrs. Gibbs suffered on this account was small compared to Mrs. Carden's growing anxieties. Rosa had taken a bad cold, waiting for her carriage

after a dance, and for six weeks had never left the house. She was become painfully thin and feverish, and her cough was shattering to listen to. Dr. Teggett shook his head when he heard Mrs. Carden's account.

"She is so weak, and has such sleepless nights; that terrible cough gives her no peace. Dr. Macdonald talks of getting a nurse for her from his 'Home.' I am sure I would willingly sit up, but he won't hear of allowing me."

Dr. Teggett promised to go and see Rosa soon, and he went with a presentiment that he should not often go again on such an errand. The silence of the house increased his depression. The doctor heard no sign of the children, who were generally noisy enough when their father was out. He felt that the house might almost be uninhabited, when he saw coming down the stairs a young woman, carrying a little tray. She looked about twenty-five, and had a fair and confident face, with fair hair that waved back from the parting, and was plaited firmly and smoothly on the nape of her neck. When she reached the landing, where the doctor stood aside to let her pass, she paused for a second and looked at him very collectedly over the jugs and bottles on the tray. Her eyes were grey and far apart, and her nose turned up. She was not pretty, but exceedingly well-complexioned and reposeful-looking. Behind the doctor was a conservatory with open doors. The winter sunshine, striking mellowly through the glass, irradiated in so poetical a manner this young woman in blue, who stood facing it, that the doctor might have imagined her to be some large-limbed Hebe, bearing down the nectar of the gods. I say "might have," for in reality no such idea crossed his prosaic brain. He immediately saw she must be the nurse from the "Home," and he mentally congratulated her on her healthy appearance.

"Shall I take Dr. Teggett up to the mistress?" asked the maid who preceded him.

The young woman in blue transferred her tray to the speaker. "Carry this down," she said, "and be sure you break nothing. Kindly step this way, sir, and I will see if Mrs. Macdonald can receive you." She spoke with gentle authority, like one accustomed to be obeyed. "Please sit down here," she said, opening the door of the big drawing-room.

"How is she?" asked the old man, still standing; he felt drawn to converse with

this pleasant-faced young woman, whose expression said so clearly that she felt capable of managing everyone's affairs very much better than they could do it for themselves.

"She has been better since Sunday; more tranquil; to-day her mother is with her."

The doctor answered the tone, rather than the words.

"Ah, poor woman! she is too anxious herself to be a very desirable companion. You are from Dr. Macdonald's 'Home,' I suppose?"

"Yes," she said, looking at him. "I am Nurse Hamilton. Dr. Macdonald has always befriended me. He is good enough to say he has confidence in me."

"Tell me, my dear," said the old man, laying a finger on her arm. "I fear it is a bad case?"

Miss Hamilton looked at him a second before answering:

"It is a very interesting one," she said softly. She went through the folding doors into the back room to announce his arrival.

Mrs. Carden came out to fetch him in. She looked ill, and her once pretty eyes were spoilt with tears.

"My poor Rosa!" she said; "you will see a great change in her, but don't observe anything. When once the weather breaks I know she will grow strong again."

The blinds in the back room were drawn down, but from the sunshine shut out behind them, a soft yellow light suffused the room. In the air was a faint smell of medicines. Rosa lay on a straight sofa facing the doors. Over the crimson rug which covered her, her thin hands wandered restlessly. It took the doctor several minutes to overcome the shock her appearance caused him.

Nurse Hamilton moved about with firm, quiet steps, rectifying the rather disordered state of the tables and chairs. Rosa, after the first greetings were over, followed her everywhere with her eyes.

"Let me shake up your pillows, please; your head is not high enough; you will bring on your cough again."

Miss Hamilton gently supported Rosa with one arm while she pulled the pillows into the required position. The contrast between the two women was terrible: the one all strength, and confidence, and exuberant health; the other a spectacle to wring the heart. The doctor remembered it months afterwards when circumstances again brought Miss Hamilton under his notice.

"She is such an admirable nurse," said Mrs. Carden when the door was shut and they were alone, "she is always so pleasant and attentive, we should not know what to do without her; should we, dearest?"

Rosa ground her hands into the clothes, and her cheeks burned painfully. She seemed suffering from a miserable irritation.

"Open the door, mamma," she said sharply, "I am stifling."

Her restless eyes met the doctor's, and he started.

"Don't you like your nurse?" he asked injudiciously.

"I detest her!" cried Rosa passionately, tearing at the fringes of her coverlet.

"Oh, my dear! I thought you liked her so much," said Mrs. Carden in surprise.

"You are always thinking things, mamma," said Rosa bitterly. "I suppose you think I am very happy and shall be downstairs in a fortnight?"

She never looked at her mother, who sat beside her, but stared gloomily away at the opposite wall, or down at her ever-working fingers.

"Well—well, we all hope you will be downstairs soon," said Dr. Teggett, patting her knee soothingly.

"You know I shall never be well again," said Rosa; "I know it, and I am very glad. I am only in the way here."

"Rosa!" cried her mother in consternation, "how can you be so unkind to me? What should we do—what would your poor little boys do without you?"

"What good am I to them? They never see me. He has sent them away," she said drearily.

"Poor little dears," said the grandmother, "they made so much noise."

"That is not the truth," cried Rosa; "you know it is because he does not think it healthy for them to be in a house where there is sickness. He will be glad when I am dead. He will choose better next time."

"Oh, Rosa, you are cruel to me," wept her mother.

Rosa was getting painfully excited. She leaned forward and seemed to struggle with the thoughts that oppressed her.

"You have been cruel to me," she said; "you have made my life miserable. Why did you make me marry him? Why did you ever come home at all? I was happy before I knew you."

Mrs. Carden became ashy pale.

"Good God! how can you say such things?" she whispered hoarsely.

Rosa laughed hysterically.

"How can you talk of God?" she cried. "You care as little for God as my husband does, only he is more honest about it. I, too, have lost God now, and health, and youth, and happiness, and everything!"

She fell back exhausted among her pillows; the blood retreated from her face, leaving it a grey white. Her tearless eyes gazed away in vacant despair. Dr. Teggett felt quite unnerved. He was obliged to take a turn round the room. When he sat down again, he blew his nose sonorously. Mrs. Carden did not utter a word. With her grey head bowed over her lap, she seemed to sit stupefied, all sense crushed out of her. An oppressive silence fell over the room, undisturbed but by the monotonous tic-tac of the clock, or the faint closing of a door down below. A lingering sunbeam slid in through a chink of the blind, and touched with its pale gilding the wall and ceiling. Suddenly the stillness was broken by the sound of a carriage driving rapidly up; a knock echoed through the house; Dr. Macdonald's deep voice was heard in the hall.

Rosa started painfully and attempted to smooth her disordered hair.

"Quick, mamma! it is Robert; make me look nice," she murmured hurriedly.

Dr. Teggett rose. The scene had been inexpressibly painful to him; he wanted to get away to recover his composure.

"I will say good-bye for the present, my dear," he said, taking her hand.

Dr. Macdonald's quick step was heard coming up the stairs; then it stopped half-way. Through the open door his voice was distinctly audible.

"Ah, Miss Hamilton, there you are! I hope you have done as I told you about lying down? I have brought you some flowers to remind you that spring is coming. Shut in here, you are in danger of forgetting all about it."

The nurse's clear voice responded:

"How good of you! What a delicious scent! I love it more than any other."

The watchers in the sick-room heard them come up the last flight together, and stop again outside the drawing-room door. They heard Dr. Macdonald ask her: "Do you know why I brought you primroses? It is because—" But the rest was spoken too low to catch. Miss Hamilton gave her fresh subdued laugh.

"You are always so good to me," she answered.

Dr. Teggett felt Rosa's fingers tighten convulsively on his own.

"I hate her," she murmured, "and that is why."

Then her grasp relaxed, and as her husband and Nurse Hamilton entered the room, she turned her face to her pillows and seemed to sleep.

Dr. Teggett slipped away through the folding doors unobserved. He was not equal to meeting anyone just then; the staircase was full of the fragrance of primroses, but he did not notice it; he got out into the street, and walked at first a little hap-hazard; his eyes were too dim to see the way.

"Poor child! poor child!" he said to himself; "at least it will soon be over!"

And a few late primroses were still being hawked about the streets when the old man learned that Rosa Macdonald was dead.

whether her breath was sweet or not, or savoured of spices, rose-water, or musk. They were enjoined to mark well her highness's neck and bosom; the size and shape of her arms, hands, and fingers, and ascertain her exact height. Lest they might be deceived into giving her more inches than belonged to her, they were directed to obtain a pair of the royal slippers and take careful measurement thereof. Henry's inquisitiveness did not end here. He insisted upon knowing if his possible consort was free from all bodily blemish, unplagued by hereditary ailments, was sometimes ill and sometimes well, or enjoyed constant health; whether she ate or drank immoderately; and generally how she stood with her uncle, the King of Aragon; what land or livelihood she had, or would have, in Naples or elsewhere; and whether such was hers for life only, or went to her heirs for ever.

By dint of close observation, and a little bribery, the envoys-extraordinary were enabled to satisfy their master's curiosity on most points. They reported that the young queen was round in figure, of middle stature, had a fat round face (unpainted), a cheerful countenance, fair complexion, clear skin, greyish-brown eyes, brown hair, and small eyebrows. Her nose rose a little in the midward and bowed a little towards the end, her lips were round and thick, her neck was full and comely; round arms of proper length; hands right fair and soft, with fingers of meet length and breadth, completed the catalogue of her conditions. Regarding her highness's exact height, the dimensions of her forehead, and the sweetness of her breath, the inquisitors remained in doubt; but the Court apothecary assured them that his mistress had no personal deformity; was a good feeder, eating heartily twice a day, but drinking little—water or cinnamon-water being her usual beverage, although sometimes she indulged in a little hypocras. Trustworthy information respecting the queen's pecuniary position was not forthcoming. She was high in favour with the old King of Aragon—possibly because she resembled him in the fashion of her nose and complexion—and he intended to give her a richer dowry than he had given any of his daughters, and report was rife in the land that she was destined to become Queen of England. The chance was given her, but she declined the honour, an example followed by the Archduchess of Savoy. Then Henry made overtures to

SOME CURIOUS COMMISSIONS.

THE politic marriage of the victor of Bosworth with Elizabeth of York was as unfelicitous as most politic marriages, and when death dissolved it, there was little grief in the survivor's heart. After three years widowhood Henry had a mind to marry again, and was recommended by Isabella of Spain to seek the hand of the young Queen of Naples. He asked her to send him a portrait of the lady, as, if she were not handsome, he would not have her for all the treasures of the world, the English people "thought so much of good looks." No portrait coming from Spain, Henry despatched James Braybrooke, John Still, and Francis Marsyn to Valencia, ostensibly to deliver Princess Katherine's greetings to her dear kinswoman, but really to learn if the Queen of Naples were fitted to share his throne.

Never, surely, did three gentlemen accept a more thankless commission than that undertaken by the bearers of Henry's most curious and exquisite instructions, as Bacon terms them. These instructions required the envoys to note and set down the young widow's age, the colour of her hair, the hue of her complexion, the quality of her skin; whether her face was fat or lean, round or sharp, painted or unpainted; her countenance cheerful or melancholy, steadfast or "blushing in communication;" the height and breadth of her forehead, the shape of her nose, the peculiarities of her eyebrows, eyes, teeth, and lips were to be precisely noted, with an express injunction to speak to her fasting, and so find out

the widow of Philip of Castille, but she declared she could not entertain a matrimonial offer until her husband had been laid in his grave ; and disinclined to wait until Joan grew tired of carrying her dead Philip about with her, the thrice-rebuffed widower went no more a-wooing.

In 1655, the Earl of Sandwich, having done his part in disposing of the Dutch fleet, off Harwich, hurried home, intent upon disposing of his eldest daughter. Consulting Mr. Pepys on the matter, he commissioned the prince of diarists to bring about a marriage between the Lady Jemimah and the heir of Sir George Cartaret. In two days' time, Pepys had obtained the formal consent of Sir George and his wife, and ere ten days had gone, arranged the articles of alliance, and heard the match mightily approved by the king and the Duke of York.

Here, it might be thought, his commission ended. That was not Pepys's notion. He had wooed and won his own wife in the old, old way, and was not inclined to allow his patron's daughter to be cheated of her courting dues, which seemed likely to be the case if over-modest Philip Cartaret were left to his own devices ; so, when that gentleman was bound for Dagenham, to make the acquaintance of his bride-elect, Pepys volunteered his companionship, which was gladly accepted. Had it been declined, the match might have fallen through, for young Cartaret came out badly as a suitor, taking no notice of Lady Jemimah, either at or after supper, and although he professed to be mightily pleased with the lady, acknowledged that much "in the dullest insipid manner that ever man did."

Next day being Sunday, it was arranged that the young people should go to church together, and Pepys spent two hours in instructing Mr. Philip how to behave, telling him to take the lady always by the hand to lead her, and, when alone with her, to make such and such compliments. But his pupil was too bashful to obey orders, and omitted taking Lady Jem's hand, both going to and coming from church, for which his mentor took him roundly to task. Dinner over, everybody adjourned to the gallery, and after chatting awhile, Lady Wright and Pepys slipped away, an example followed by Lord and Lady Crewe, the lovers being left alone, save for the pretty little daughter of Lady Wright, and she, says Pepys, "most innocently came out afterwards, and shut the door to, as if she

had done it, poor child, by inspiration, which made us without have good sport to laugh at it."

Before leaving Dagenham, Pepys took Lady Jem aside, and enquired how she liked the gentleman, or if she was under any difficulty concerning him. She blushed and hid her face ; but the questioner was not to be denied, and at last she confessed her readiness to obey her father and mother, "which was all she could say or I expect." On the other side, he was gratified by Philip Cartaret thanking him heartily for his care and pains, and declaring himself mightily pleased with his matrimonial prospects ; but, for all that, his adviser had reason to complain that he found him almost as backward in his caresses as he was on the first day.

On the 31st of July, just five weeks after Pepys opened negotiations, Mr. Philip Cartaret and Lady Jemimah Montagu were married at Dagenham, Pepys being somewhat troubled by the bride's sad looks, but comforting himself with the hope it was only her gravity in a little greater degree than usual.

Commissioned by her lord to obtain some bone-lace for presentation to the Queen of France, Dorothy, Countess of Leicester—being resolved, for the honour of the country and her own credit to send none but the best—was under the necessity of informing her husband that the money he proposed to spend would not suffice, bone-laces, if good, being dear. Leicester was evidently as ignorant as most men of the cost of feminine finery. This could not be said of Lord Stair, Queen Anne's able representative at Paris. Writing to thank him for performing so well in her small affairs, Marlborough's duchess says she never had anything in her life so easy and well-made as "the pair of bodyes" he had procured her, and therefore troubled him to get another pair of plain white tabby for her own wear, and a little pair, bound with gold braid on the front, for her daughter, Lady Harriett. Furthermore, she wants a nightgown for herself and a "monto" and petticoat for Lady Harriett, taking leave to set forth very exactly what she would have. "My nightgown need have no petticoat to it, being only of that sort to be easy and warm, with a light silk wadd in it, such as are used to come out of bed and gird round, without any train at all, but very full. 'Tis no matter what colour, except pink or yellow—no gold nor silver in it, but some

pretty striped satin or damask, lined with a taffetty of the same colour. Lady Harriett's is to be a monto and petticoat to go abroad in, but I would not have any gold or silver in it, nor a stuff that is dear, but a middling one that may be worn either in winter or summer. You have seen her, I believe, but 'tis not amiss to say she is above thirteen years old, that they may the better guess at the length of the monto ; and if they are as exact as the taylor was in the bodyes, it will not want the least alteration." Like her famous husband, Duchess Sarah had an eye to saving, intimating that she is in no hurry for the things, but would have them up on any occasion, "that one need not be troubled with the Custom House people."

If an ambassador was plagued in this way, an ambassador's wife could not hope to escape similar inflictions. When Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was in Turkey, every lady of her acquaintance in London and Vienna pestered her for pots of Balm of Mecca; a cosmetic not so easily obtained as they supposed, nor of much use when it was obtained, if Lady Mary's own experience went for anything. Having applied some to her face one night, she found it next morning swelled to an extraordinary size, "and all over as red as my Lady H.'s;" in which sad state it remained for three days, her looking-glass affording her no consolation for the reproaches of her husband. Some of the demands upon her good-nature afforded the lively lady food for laughter. To one of her many exacting friends she wrote : " You desire me to buy you a Greek slave, who is to be mistress of a thousand good qualities. The Greeks are subjects and not slaves. Those who are to be bought in that manner, are either such as are taken in war, or stolen by the Tartars from Russia, Circassia, or Georgia, and are such miserable, awkward, poor wretches, you would not think any of them worthy to be your housemaids. The fine slaves that wait upon the great ladies, or serve the pleasures of the great men, are all bought at the age of eight or nine years old, and educated with great care to accomplish them in singing, dancing, embroidery, etc. ; and their patron never sells them, except as a punishment for some very great fault. If ever they grow weary of them, they either present them to a friend, or give them their freedom. Those that are exposed to sale at the markets, are always either guilty of some crime, or so worthless that they are of no use at all."

Unable to satisfy her friend's longing for a Greek slave, Lady Mary made some amends for the disappointment by executing another commission from her—sending her a Turkish love-letter, in the shape of a small box containing a pearl, a clove, a jonquil, a piece of paper, a pear, a cake of soap, a bit of coal, a rose, a straw, a piece of cloth, some cinnamon, a match, a gold thread, hair, a grape, a piece of gold wire, and a pod of pepper. Taken out of the box in the above order, these articles signified : "Fairest of the young, you are as slender as this clove ; you are an unblown rose. I have long loved you, and you have not known it. Have pity on my passion ; I faint every hour. Give me some hope ; I am sick with love. May I die, and all my years be yours. May you be pleased, and your sorrow mine. Suffer me to be your slave. Your price is not to be found. But my fortune is yours ; I burn, I burn ; my flame consumes me. Do not turn away your face. Crown of my head ; my eyes ; I die, come quickly !" The pepper-pod standing for the postscript : "Send me an answer."

If she had good reason to exclaim at the unreasonable requirements of her correspondents, Lady Mary was equally capable of desiring strange things for herself, owing to having commissioned somebody to get her a mummy, "which I hope," says she, "will come safe to my hands, notwithstanding the misfortune that befel a very fine one designed for the King of Sweden. He gave a great price for it, and the Turks took it into their heads that he must have some considerable projects depending upon it. They fancied it was the body of God knows who, and that the state of their empire mystically depended on the conservation of it. Some old prophecies were remembered upon this occasion, and the mummy was committed prisoner to the Seven Towers, where it has remained under close confinement ever since. I dare not try my interest on so considerable a point as the release of it ; but I hope mine will pass without examination."

Asked by a friend to find him a footman, an obliging man of letters sent on his own servant with the following comical letter of recommendation: "I think the bearer will fit you. I know he can run well, for he hath run away twice from me, but he knew the way back again. Yet, though he hath a running head as well as running heels—and who will expect a footman to be a stayed man?—I would not part with him

were I not to go post to the North. There be some things in him that answer for his waggery. He will come when you call him ; go when you bid him ; and shut the door after him. He is faithful and stout, and a lover of his master. He is a great enemy to all dogs, if they bark at him in his running, for I have seen him confront a huge mastiff and knock him down. When you go a country journey, or have him run with you a-hunting, you must spirit him with liquor. If he be not for your turn, turn him over to me again when I come back." Howel had a knack of giving odd descriptions of people. Desired by Master Thomas Adams to look up a newly-married couple in whom he was interested, Howel did so, and reported that he never before beheld such a disparity between two that were one flesh ; comparing the husband to a cloth of tissue doubled, cut upon coarse canvas ; and the wife to a buckram petticoat lined with satin. "A blind man," continued he, "is fittest to hear her sing ; one would take delight to see her dance if masked ; and it would please you to discourse with her in the dark, if your imagination could forbear to run upon her face. When you marry I wish you such an inside of a wife, but from such an outward phisnomy the Lord deliver you !"

When Lafayette paid a visit to the United States, he intimated his desire to become master of an opossum, and a Baltimore editor gladly undertook to see that the general had one to take home with him. Anxious to make the most of the occasion, he proclaimed his want in a highly-spiced appeal to his countrymen, urging them to prove that republics were not always ungrateful. They responded cheerfully—too cheerfully—to the appeal. Opossums came in from north and south, east and west, until the overwhelmed journalist found himself possessed of two thousand one hundred and ninety-nine too many. He could not afford them separate accommodation, he dared not lodge them together ; so, at night, he turned them all loose in Monument Square to quarter themselves as they listed. Next day, 'possums were here, there, and everywhere in Baltimore, to the delight of the black, and the disgust of the white citizens, who fervently wished that Lafayette had never heard of an opossum, or that the editor had executed his commission with more discretion. It is possible, however, to be too discreet. Certain

Cincinnati capitalists, interested in a railway Bill passing through the Kentucky Legislature, despatched an honest man to Frankfort with twenty thousand dollars, to be used "where it would do most good." He stayed there until the Bill was introduced and thrown out, when he returned to Cincinnati to report the result of his mission to his employers. "Did you distribute the whole of the money ?" asked they. "Not a cent," was the reply ; "the members were willing enough to take it, but they wouldn't give receipts, and I was not coming back without either money or vouchers for it." And the would-be log-rollers no longer wondered at the non-passing of their Bill.

GEOFFREY STIRLING.

BY MRS. LEITH ADAMS.

PART II.

CHAPTER X. DEATH'S COUNTERFEIT.

To Geoffrey Stirling, the loss of his beloved son—of Ralph, the one passionately-worshipped idol of his heart and life, was not only an immeasurable sorrow—it was a sorrow with a sting in it.

What cries the voice of conscience—that voice so long stifled—in the stillness of that still chamber, where a tortured man paces to and fro, with bent head and furrowed brow, with pain-struck eyes cast down, with working hands clasped in each other behind his back ?

" You have played for colossal stakes ; you have played a desperate game ; you have lived a lie ; you have counted the whiteness of your own soul, the cleanness of your own hands as dross ; you have basked in the smiles of the false jade called Fortune, fancying yourself her spoiled darling ; and now you are ruined, beggared, bankrupt, even in the very hour of your success. The heir was coming to enter upon his kingdom ; you were preparing to sun yourself in the light of his prosperity ; to revel in your pride in him, to rejoice—for so you hoped it might one day be—in his happiness, wedded to one your keen and wary eyes had singled out for him. Your heart yearned for him ; your longings stretched forth like mighty arms to touch him across the sea ; your love went out to meet him like a trusty and loving messenger ; and now—where are your dreams ? There is not a withered leaf buried beneath the snow of this winter's night more dead than your dead hopes."

A hanging lamp lights the room in which Geoffrey Stirling is thus chewing the bitter cud of retrospection. Its soft glow falls full upon the picture of the dying miser.

A moment Squire Stirling stops opposite to it. He shades his eyes with his hand, as if to concentrate the whole force of his sight upon the scene so vividly pourtrayed.

How skilfully has the painter's hand limned the relaxing muscles of the fingers that clutch the air! How pitifully helpless is the malign mowing of the convulsed lips! How maddeningly mocking is the gleam in the dark eyes of the woman!

Geoffrey Stirling shakes his clenched hand at that daring, beautiful, evil face.

"It is Fate that has played the traitor to me—Fate who has wrested my treasure from me."

He speaks loudly in the exaltation of the moment; then his voice breaks and falls as he moves away, sadly muttering:

"I only wanted my wealth to treasure for my darling's sake—only for him—only for him! I did not want to take it with me, to hoard or hold it. I wanted to make Ralph happy—honoured—great. What are my riches to me now? Dross—dross—dross!"

He swerved a little as he uttered the last word with sad insistence, sweeping his hand across his eyes, as if to clear his vision of some gathering mist.

Then he huddled in his chair, stirring the logs, cowering over the blaze.

"I am cold," he said, "very, very cold, with a chill no fire can warm. I have been like that often of late. It is nothing—nothing. Turtle smiled when I told him. 'You grow fanciful,' he said. That's it—I'm fanciful. No wonder, either. I've led a life to wear the strongest nerves—been wary over it, too, that have I."

Here a gleam of crafty cunning narrowed the eyes that watched the blaze, and Geoffrey Stirling's long strong hands began to pass slowly up and down the slender shanks of his attenuated form. He had clung tenaciously to the fashion of a bygone time, and now, his evening dress of close-fitting black hose, meeting breeches of equally sombre hue, showed the slenderness of his limbs to the full.

"There's nothing the matter with me except that I have lost flesh of late—most men do about my time of life—and now and again I have a coldness about my legs; they grow numb, but it soon passes off. It is not worth thinking about."

The spirit of restlessness was coming upon him once more.

Cruel truths, momentarily forgotten in the wanderings of an overstrained brain, began to show their ghoul-like faces peering into his.

Years back, at a terrible epoch in his own life, he had counted the sorrows and sufferings of others as but slight things. Now, sights and sounds, ghastly wraiths from a dead past, come crowding about him as he sat. A pair of mad eyes, full of sombre fire, glare at him from the shadow of a slouched hat—glare at him, close, to his own—through the diamondpanes of a casement that, wrenched violently back upon its stanchion, lets in the sobbing of a river against the side of a little white boat, and then—twelve deep-toned notes from St. Mary's tower vibrate on the air.

Who is this woman, too, with dark, grandly-outlined face bent above a heap of something soft and white upon her lap? Surely she sews a shroud? Someone lies dead in the next room—someone for whom that last garment is being fashioned.

"No, no," mutters Geoffrey Stirling as this strange phantasy passes across his mental vision; "I will not see him. I have been ill."

Rising from his chair, he once more paces to and fro like some wild creature in its den.

They will not crowd about him so if he keeps moving, these unmannerly phantoms who thrust themselves upon his notice.

Has he not scourged them from him all these years with the thong of his own passionate resolve, and now—are they about to defy the lash?

What is this new spirit of the craven that is gathering about his heart? Why does he long to be alone? Why is the solitude of that silent chamber so welcome to him?

Is it that the crime of ten years ago has taken a new semblance—a sinister and unfamiliar aspect that makes it seem as fresh-spilt blood, instead of as blood that has long since soaked into the earth and lost its crimson dye?

He must—he will evade these serried ranks of haunting intangible beings.

But they will not be set aside.

Here they come, seeming to pursue him as he turns. There is a worn wan face framed in the piteous widow's cap: children cling to a rusty black gown. Little Jake, the cobbler, has one child

by the hand, and is trying to lead him on ; but the boy strains back to his mother, and his eyes never leave her face.

Then comes a portly figure, whip in hand ; and Farmer Dale's face, robbed of its wonted bloom, looks gravely and sadly at Geoffrey Stirling.

Who was it said that the farmer's eldest lad had to give up a certain ambitious scheme of "schooling" because the bank was robbed, and all the hard-earned savings gone ?

And what about Squire Ashby ? How the old man blusters, vows he will have Gaylad shot, "Aye, and the thief, too, if law can do it, by Gad !"

A woman with a gentle troubled face stands by the old squire ; she has her hand upon his shoulder, and her sad questioning eyes are turned upon Cuthbert Deane, whose out-looking fearless glance seems to strike like a spear to Geoffrey's heart, and is a hard thing to meet.

Somewhere Ralph is sitting among the shadows on the stairs. A little yellow pup nestles on his lap, and the boy's hand passes softly over and over the round sleek head.

Geoffrey has to pass the couple as he goes upstairs, and the boy looks up and smiles.

The pain of this last memory is too keen.

The thong of passionate resolve is set to scourge the ghostly visions off, but for once the lash fails to strike them.

On, on they come, drifting him at their pleasure.

Geoffrey Stirling is standing by a table where lies an old leather-bound book with heavy silver clasps.

There is a faint click, and the volume lies open.

A moment's hesitation, and with nervous hasty fingers the leaves are turned, ruffled, fall apart.

There it is—the record of his boy's birth—and lower down a little patch of something that had once been of softest saffron hue, but that now is brown and faded—the withered primrose of a spring as dead long since as itself—a flower that Ralph, a tottering wee thing of three summers, had brought to his father as a first love-gift.

At sight of this memento Geoffrey Stirling's sorrow breaks forth afresh.

He raises the filmy fragile thing a moment in his hand, then lays it reverently down, bending to read the inscription above it :

"Ralph. Born February 14th, 1831."

"He was my valentine, sent straight

from heaven. He came to gladden my heart with the first snowdrops of the year ; my boy—my boy !"

He is kneeling now beside the open book ; his eyes stare eagerly at the words of which the ink is now fading almost to the tint of the dead primrose.

For the nonce sorrow has hidden sin. The troop of sad reproachful figures that have filed before his mind's eye, a weary procession of pain, have all given place to this one tender gentle presence.

The hard-lined, clear-cut features of the man work ; the thin, set lips relax and quiver ; the strained eyes soften, glisten, swim, and with a strangled sob Geoffrey Stirling lays his head down on the arms outstretched across the old Bible, and breaks into bitter weeping.

As the cry of Rachel weeping for her children because they "were not," so the cry of this desolate-hearted man went up to God, breaking upon the quiet of the quiet night.

Gaylad, with a low whine, crawled to the side of his master, and shivered in his sleek skin as though the cold of the night outside were chilling his veins.

The silence, rent by the pitiful sound of a man's sobbing, was now stirred also by the soft turning of the handle of the door, and Gaylad's whine became a growl, while Geoffrey Stirling, raising his tear-stained face from the shelter of his arms, started to his feet.

As he did so the leaves of the Bible were swayed and fluttered by his hand ; and, when stealthy footsteps in the corridor told that the would-be intruder had withdrawn despairing, he looked down upon the open book, to see not the record of his lost darling's birth, but words that seemed to stand out in startling relief from their surroundings—words that his strained and exalted condition caused him to regard in the light of a dart aimed direct at himself from heaven : "Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee."

"No, no," he mutters, shrinking back from the page wherein that dread fiat is set forth ; "my time is not yet ; I am hale and hearty, in the prime of my life. There is nothing wrong with me—only a little coldness now and then, a strange swimming in my head ; but they pass—they pass."

Yet even as he speaks, that strange giddiness seizes him, and he staggers to his chair to sit there all a-shake, with trembling hands, and chill dank sweat glistening on his pallid brow.

"I have lost all," he moans, "all—the chalice is emptied, save of the bitter dregs. The load I carry bears me down. It has grown heavy all at once—since Ralph died, and those who spy upon me will see how I bend and groan beneath it."

A while he sits silent, gazing at the fire, now and again stretching his hands to the flame, or rubbing them absently the one on the other as though he would fain stir their sluggish blood to brisker movement.

How still the night is!

The last hour of the old year is waning. Eleven has long since chimed from St. Mary's tower. The cold is intense, and branches creak and cry; but there is no wind, and an exquisite purple dome, star-pied, spans the white world.

Cuthbert Deane's choir, having taken it terribly to heart that Christmas Eve had been hopeless as to weather (viewed in reference to the singing of carols under the windows of people who were considered worthy of such delectable entertainment), had determined to make the best of matters, and, by wishing everyone a happy new year, and singing the carols so carefully practised for many weeks back, combine the due and proper keeping of two festivals.

It is close on midnight when they gather, a company of closely-muffled figures, on the lawn at Dale End.

Gaylad has caught the rustle of their footsteps on the crisp snow, pricks up his long silky ears, and ceases for the moment to watch his master.

That master himself hears nothing. He lies back listlessly in the glimmer of the fire, slowly recovering from the ague-chill that had seized him.

"I am strong, strong," he mutters, and smiles as one who looks down upon past folly from a height of wisdom.

He bares his lank and muscular wrist, closing and unclosing the long, delicately formed, yet powerful hand.

Yes, he is strong indeed. How else could he have borne that burden of which he spoke but now—letting no man see, even by one uncertain wavering step, that he carried a load all through the long, long years?

As this thought passes through his mind he smiles again; but, even in smiling, starts and turns a little sideways in his chair with his face towards the curtained window.

For a single voice, sweet and clear,

comes out of the night, making it beautiful with the story of the Saviour's love to man.

Child Jesu lay on Mary's knee,
And opened wide were his sad eyes;
"Oh, sleep, my little king," said she,
"Oh, sleep—the stars are in the skies." Then round about that wondrous pair Angelic voices filled the air.

"We sing the story of the Saviour's birth,
Peace and good-will to all on earth,
Peace for the weary and the worn,
Since Christ is born."

The last four lines are sung in chorus, and Geoffrey Stirling's hand rises and falls to the rhythm of the melody.

At first, nothing but the sweetness of the harmonised voices hits his fancy—he is an ardent lover of music, and the carol is quaint and full of harmony—but, as the chorus dies away, its promise of a peace divine and perfect, of a rest for those who are weary and heavy-laden, comes home to him. In his deep eyes dawns a wistful yearning. Success he has had, honour, greatness, the love of those about him; all these good things have been his.

But peace—when has that fair white messenger from heaven nestled in his heart and lain in his bosom?

Rest? Has he ever known it in its full and perfect sense, since a sin was sinned, and a life burdened with a terrible mystery?

Again the one sweet voice carols of that fair glad night in Bethlehem:

Child Jesu's eyes were closed in sleep,
And as He slept His Mother mild
Did bend her head and watching keep,
With tears—above the heavenly child—
And still around the wondrous pair,
Angelic voices filled the air:

"We sing the story of the Saviour's birth,
Peace and good-will to all on earth,
Pardon to sin's repentant sigh—
Since Christ shall die."

This time, as the chorus ends, comes the sound of hushed voices—one in remonstrance (or so it seemed), several all at once, and eager, yet awed.

Then once more many feet crush the crisp snow.

Davey has dismissed the singers, telling them that the squire is ill—in sorrow—not to be disturbed.

It was, take it altogether, a bitter disappointment. Which of the singers did not wish to shine in the eyes of Squire Stirling? Had they not gallantly faced the possibility of meeting the Dale End ghost, to give him late, yet hearty Christmas greeting? Thus they reasoned among themselves, hastening their steps across haunted ground

since no good was to come of lingering there.

Meanwhile, a strange message has their interrupted song borne to Geoffrey Stirling.

Peace and pardon—these were then the priceless boons Christ gave to men—and yet, were not both set far from him?

Reach out as he might, he could not touch them.

Once more he paces the floor in restless wanderings—once more the phantom brood gathers about him.

Surely, that pictured face beneath the slouched hat looks at him with the eyes of Gabriel Devenant!

Here, too, comes another ghost from the limbos of the past.

It is that of a man who loved and trusted him, who, cold and hard to all the world beside, for him alone was tender; the man whose upright soul withered under the blight of dishonour; the man who died with Ralph's name upon his lips.

Heavily labours the heart of the haunted man, whose fancy plays him such strange tricks to-night.

A wild light begins to burn in his sunken eyes; in his ear rings the burden of the carol singers' story:

Pardon to man's repentant sigh,
Since Christ shall die—

"I do repent," he says, glancing from this side to that like a hunted criminal; "I did not do it for myself; I did it for Ralph. Only give me time—give me length of years, and I will make reparation. I will—I will—I will keep nothing back. I swear I do repent! Oh, my God! give me pardon and peace. I have been no coward; I have borne the burden of my secret long and well. It was easy to bear while there was Ralph to bear it for; but now, only give me time, and I will expiate—I will redeem the past!"

Thicker and thicker the phantoms come about him; they gibber in his ears, goad him to madness with their sad reproachful looks.

He ceases that weary pacing up and down. He must, for the chill and theague are curdling round his heart again. He

clutches the narrow oaken ledge of the mantelshelf, steadyng himself by it.

A frenzy of mingled fear and resolve is upon him.

"It is nothing," he stammers, wildly staring at the image in the high mirror that stares back with wide dull eyes; "it is a fancy—it will pass. 'This night,' the book said, 'this night.' No, no; give me time! I will confess—I will confess."

The words are panted out, as his eyes grow more and more to the image in the glass.

What does he see there?

The horrible Doppelgänger of himself—the presentment of death in his own person.

He sees the leaden-grey colour steal over cheek and brow; sees the palsied trembling of the head. The starting eyes strain and stare, until that ghastly shadow of himself is veiled for ever from his sight by the failure of thought and consciousness in his own brain.

In vain the cold fingers clutch the narrow shelf, in vain he tries to rally sense and strength. He is alone in his extremity, and that by his own act and deed.

There is a terrible hoarse cry, and Geoffrey Stirling lies a huddled-up heap upon the rug, while Gaylad, lifting his tawny muzzle, keenly piteously over his master.

The clamour of many voices, and the hurry of many feet, come nearer and nearer. Someone tries and shakes the latch of the doors that lead into the garden.

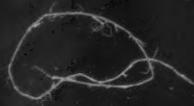
There is the crash of glass, the strain and splintering of wood, and Davey, closely followed by Cuthbert Deane, are in the room.

With a cry, scarcely less heartrending than that uttered a moment ago by the lips now pale and silent, Davey flings himself beside the fallen man, raises the head to the pillow of his breast, tears open Geoffrey Stirling's vest, and thrusts his hand in above the heart that sorrow and sin have broken.

"It beats!" he cries, looking rapturously up to Cuthbert Deane, who bends above the two. "Thank Heaven!"

The Right of Translating Articles from ALL THE YEAR ROUND is reserved by the Authors.





Provident LIFE OFFICE.

FOUNDED 1806.

50, REGENT STREET, W.,
AND 14, CORNHILL, E.C.,
LONDON.

THIS OFFICE, established more than 76 years ago, has now
a Fund belonging to the Policy-holders

EXCEEDING TWO MILLIONS.

It has paid in Claims nearly SEVEN MILLION
POUNDS Sterling, and has declared Bonuses amounting
to no less than

£2,342,000.

As an example of the advantage of assuring in a high class Office, it may be mentioned that, in the month of November, 1882, the sum of £445 was paid in Cash, by way of Bonus, to a Policy-holder insured for £500 only.

The Premium ceased to be payable five years since; a small portion of the Bonus having been applied to extinguish the same.

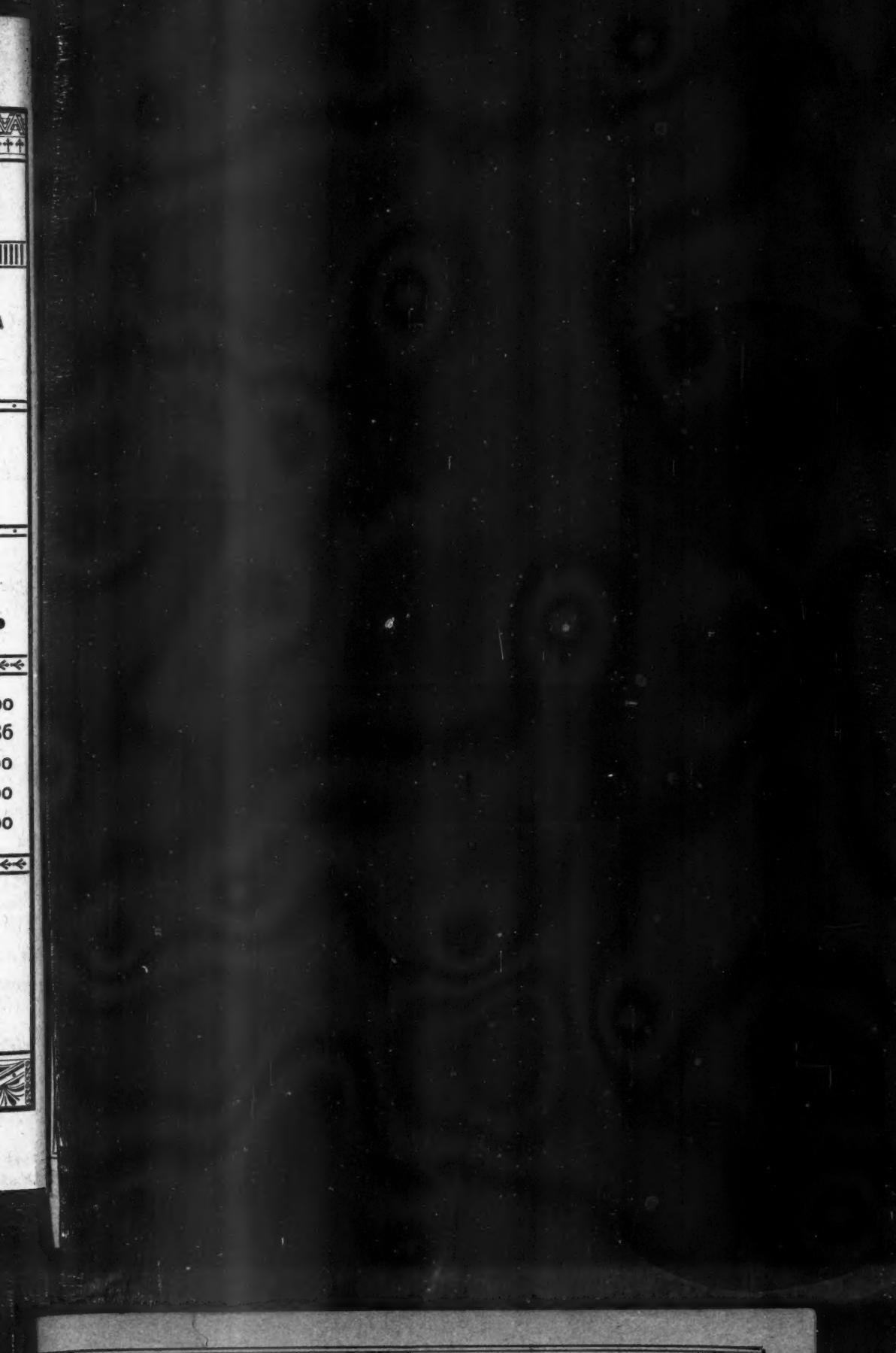
The £500 Policy is still in full force, and will be augmented in May, 1883, by a further valuable Bonus.

FOUNDED 1806.

PROVIDENT LIFE OFFICE.

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| EXISTING ASSURANCES exceed - | £6,600,000 |
| INVESTED FUNDS - - - - - | £2,207,986 |
| ANNUAL INCOME exceeds - - - - - | £300,000 |
| CLAIMS PAID nearly - - - - - | £7,000,000 |
| BONUSES DECLARED - - - - - | £2,342,000 |

50, REGENT STREET,
AND 14, CORNHILL,
LONDON.



P

The
decided
terrible
The d

I

L

N

is provi

Mattew

has pu

atten

Bart,

&c. &

Mr.

F

The

24

S

PEL
EG

AR
PA
DA

GOLD MEDAL

PARIS, 1878.



JOSEPH GILLOTT'S CELEBRATED STEEL PENS.

SOLD BY ALL DEALERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

Every Packet bears the *Fac-simile*
Signature,

PULVERMACHER'S IMPROVED PATENT GALVANIC CHAIN BANDS, BELTS, ETC.

Approved by the Academy of Medicine of Paris, and other Medical Authorities in England and Abroad.

THESE HIGHLY-IMPROVED INVENTIONS render Electricity in a mild continuous form, perfectly self-applicable, and extremely efficacious, no shock or unpleasant sensation being experienced, it thus becomes a true fountain of health and vigorous speedily soothing agonising pain, reanimating torpid limbs, reviving the sluggish functions of life, and imparting the renewed energy and vitality to constitutions enfeebled by various influences. The daily increasing number of cures effected by PULVERMACHER'S MEDICO-GALVANIC SYSTEM in cases of

| | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Indigestion, | Sciatica, | Asthma, | Epilepsy, | General Debility, |
| Liver Complaints, | Deafness, | Bronchitis, | Rheumatism, | Female Complaints, |
| Neuralgia, | Loss of Voice, | Paralysis, | Constipation, | Functional Disorders, etc., |

is proved by innumerable Testimonials both Medical and Private. These GALVANIC CHAIN BANDS, by supplying the electrical deficiency, constitutes Nature's most congenial curative in the ailments referred to, thereby embodying a host of remedies in one. Thirty-five years' successful experience has proved the marvellous remedial powers of these appliances, even in cases defying ordinary treatment. MR. PULVERMACHER begs to draw attention to the opinions of competent medical and scientific authorities, including SIR C. LOCOCK, Bart., M.D., F.R.C.S.; SIR HENRY HOLLAND, Bart., M.D., F.R.C.S., and F.R.S.; SIR J. R. MARTIN, Bart., C.B., F.R.C.S., F.S.A., and F.R.S.; SIR W. FERGUSON, Bart., M.D., F.R.S., F.R.C.S., &c. &c., published in Pamphlet, "GALVANISM, NATURE'S CHIEF RESTORER OF IMPAIRED VITAL ENERGY."

SENT POST FREE ON APPLICATION TO

Mr. J. L. Pulvermacher, Galvanic Establishment, 194, Regent St., London, W.

Furnish your House or Apartments throughout

ON

MOEDER'S HIRE SYSTEM.

The Original, Best, and most Liberal Cash Prices.

NO EXTRA CHARGE FOR TIME GIVEN.

Illustrated printed Catalogues, with full particulars of terms, Post Free.

F. MOEDER,

248, 249, 250, TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD; & 19, 20, 21, MORWELL ST., W.

ESTABLISHED 1852.

SYMINGTON'S WORLD RENOWNED PEA FLOUR

PATENT HIGH-PRESSURE
STEAM-PREPARED.

For Soups, &c., in 1d., 2d., 4d., and 6d. Packets; and 1s., 1s. 6d., and 3s. Tins.
PEA SOUP, Seasoned and Flavoured, in 1d., 2d., and 6d. Packets; and 1s. Tins.

EGYPTIAN FOOD. This Food is a preparation of Finest Egyptian Lentils, and other Nutritious Substances. For Invalids and Persons of Weak Digestion, or for Children, it is invaluable. In Tins, 1s. per lb.

ARABS' COFFEE, in Oblong Tins, 1lb., $\frac{1}{2}$ lb., and $\frac{1}{4}$ lb., 2s. per lb.

PATENT COFFEES, in Tins, 1lb., $\frac{1}{2}$ lb., and $\frac{1}{4}$ lb., 1s., 1s. 4d., and 1s. 8d. per lb.

DANDELION COFFEE.—Breakfast Beverage for Persons of weak digestion. In Tins, 6d., 1s., and 1s. 6d. each.

W. SYMINGTON & CO., Bowden Steam Mills, Market Harborough.

ESTABLISHED OVER FIFTY YEARS.

RETAIL—16, LUDGATE HILL, LONDON. Sold by all Grocers.

DR. ROOKE'S ORIENTAL PILLS & SOLAR ELIXIR.

THESE WELL-KNOWN FAMILY MEDICINES have had a continually increasing sale throughout the United Kingdom and the British Colonies since their introduction in 1836, and are especially noted for their STRENGTHENING and RESTORATIVE Properties. Hence their invariable success in the RELIEF and CURE of

INDIGESTION,
LIVER COMPLAINTS,
ASTHMA,
BRONCHITIS,

PULMONARY CONSUMPTION,
RHEUMATISM,
GOUT, SCROFULA,
GENERAL DEBILITY,

And all Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM,

Whether arising from a sedentary mode of life, unhealthy occupation, insalubrious climate, or other cause whatsoever.

The ORIENTAL PILLS are sold in Boxes at 1s. 1½d. and 4s. 6d. each.

The SOLAR ELIXIR in Bottles at 4s. 6d. and 11s. each.

Both to be obtained of all Chemists and Patent Medicine Vendors.

DR. ROOKE'S ANTI-LANCET.

All who wish to preserve health and thus prolong life, should read DR. ROOKE's "ANTI-LANCET," or "HANDY GUIDE to DOMESTIC MEDICINE," which contains 172 pages, and is replete with anecdotes, sketches, biographical matter, portraits of eminent men, &c.

It may be obtained GRATIS of any Chemist, or POST FREE from DR. ROOKE, Scarborough, England.

Concerning this book, the late eminent author, Sheridan Knowles, observed : "It will be an incalculable boon to every person who can read and think."

CROSBY'S BALSMATIC COUGH ELIXIR

Is the leading Medicine of the day, and is specially recommended by several eminent Physicians: it has been used with the most signal success for Asthma, Bronchitis, Consumption, Coughs, Influenza, Consumptive Night-Sweats, Spitting of Blood, Shortness of Breath, and all Affections of the Throat and Chest.

Sold in Bottles at 1s. 9d., 4s. 6d., and 11s. each, by all respectable Chemists, and wholesale by JAMES M. CROSBY, Chemist, Scarborough.

Invalids should read Crosby's Prize Treatise on "DISEASES OF THE LUNGS AND AIR VESSELS," a copy of which can be had Gratis of all Chemists.